



Great River Bend Adventure

The following list describes all of the elements located on Peanut Butter Mountain. After the brief element description, rules, safety concerns, general facilitation ideas, and event sequencing suggestions are explained. Some of the elements also include possible environmental education themes that can be used to front-load the activity. Each element can be facilitated an infinite number of ways. Please keep in mind that, as long as the safety precautions are upheld, the facilitator has the freedom to facilitate in a method that best suits his/her style.

To complete this course you need to have two things. One is your imaginations, because that is where all of the danger is. The second thing is the rest of your group because the whole group needs to work together to get through the challenges. Keep in mind the 4 C's of teamwork.

1. Concentration to find solutions to the problems.
 2. Communications to get your ideas heard, as well as listen to other members' ideas.
 3. Cooperation with each other to accomplish the goal.
 4. Consideration of others feelings, needs and differences.
- Facilitator remember to model the behavior you want from the students (i.e. don't sit down at an element).
 - "You are only as fast as your slowest person. You are only as tall as your shortest person. You are only as smart as your loudest person."
 - Safety guidelines – Ask them "What are some things we can do to make sure people won't get hurt?" Let them know that their answers will help you start to see how safe the group is and how well they will work together.
 - When you clearly set your expectation high and early, kids are more likely to follow.
 - Ask them how things work together in nature. Work up to defining "interdependence", how everything is connected to everything else in nature. Things depend on each other to survive.

All Abound (Wolf Woes / Piranha River)

- *Object:* To support the entire group on the platform (off the ground) for a measured time (i.e. ten seconds, long enough to howl five times, or long enough to sing a song, ex: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"). Larger groups may allow one or more (number decided by facilitator) people to have one foot touching the ground.
- *Safety:*
 1. Do not allow the "Lincoln log" scenario (stacking participants) to develop. Students piled up in this fashion can cause serious injury to one another.
 2. Do not allow students to climb on each other. Each person needs to have at least one foot on the platform.
- *Individual and Group Issues:* Appropriate touch, body size, effectively communicating ideas, problem-solving
- *Sequencing of Event:* This element can be used after other group initiatives (i.e. human knot) have been facilitated that involve appropriate touch and little to no personal space. This can be one of the first problem-solving initiatives.
- *Situation:*
 1. Your group has become a pack of wolves. A wolf needs how much land for a territory? (*10 square miles*) A pack requires 100+ square miles with a home range of about 25 square miles. Do wolves like being around human encroachment? (*No*) Are there many places left in America with 100+ sq. mi. of unbroken wilderness for wolves to live? As a result your pack is left with a small territory. See if this new terrain will support your pack.
 2. Your group must get everyone on board this tiny raft in order to successfully cross the river filled with blood thirsty piranhas.

Rope Maze (Bat Cave / Petrified Forest)

- *Object:* The group must walk blindfolded through the maze without touching the trees. If someone touches a tree, the whole group starts over. You can say that they're in a petrified forest and contact, physical or visual, with the trees causes them to become petrified, causing them to start over.

- *Safety:* Make sure that the kids understand that the trust that the blindfolded person is putting in them is very important and serious if we want to avoid bonked noses heads. Move slowly through the maze. The blindfolded person should also make it known if they are not sure what is going on and that communication of their feeling is important. Place adults throughout the maze to watch for “blind” bats.
- *Situation:*
 1. Your group is now bats that need to get out of a very dark and twisting cave to feed on the many tasty insects flying about in the dark. How many mosquitoes can a bat eat in an hour? (600-1000). Can bats see in the dark? (yes, but no better than humans). If they can't see in the dark, then how do they find their food at night? (echo-location). What is echo-location? (a bat chirps and listens to changes in sound waves as they travel back to funnel-like ears). Ask everyone to feel for one hair on their heads and explain that a bat can use echo-location to detect something as small and thin as a human hair. Since no one here has this special adaptation, we are going to put them into pairs to use echo-location. One partner will be blindfolded and the other partner is responsible for telling them which way to go. For an extra challenge, either make it illegal to touch the blindfolded person, or make it illegal to use human language. At the end of the maze, switch places and blindfolds with your partner.
 2. Your group must walk through the petrified forest without becoming petrified yourselves. This can happen by either touching on of the trees or having eye contact with “fossil dust”.

TP Shuffle (Spaceship Earth / Invisible Gateway)

- *Objective:* Place your entire group on top of the horizontal 4'x4'. Then organize them without touching the ground. If they fall off they just start again from where they were. For added challenge the group can not use any form of verbal communication to accomplish the goal.
 1. To alphabetize the group by the first letter of their middle name (or last name).
 2. To get the group in the opposite order of what they got on originally.
 3. In order from shortest to tallest.
 4. By birthday, month and day.
- *Safety:*
 1. This is a self spotted event: i.e. the participants should be aware that a fall to the ground is a

possibility, and they should be responsible for their selves to stay on top, as well as for the members of their team. Adults and the facilitator(s) can also help spot when needed.

2. Pinched and squashed fingers are common on this element. Direct the participants to be very aware of the proximity of their fingers to other participants' feet.
- *Individual and Group Issues:* Working together, communication, problem solving, physical balancing, appropriate touch
 - *Sequencing of Event:* This element can be an early or beginning initiative; you may follow this up with more complicated initiatives.
 - *Situation:*
 1. Participants now have a chance to go on board a spaceship - Spaceship Earth! How is the earth like a spaceship? (*in space, self-contained*). Everything we need to survive is found on our Spaceship Earth. Can we go off earth to another planet to get fresh water if we run out? Can we go to another planet to get more fresh air or soil for crops? No. Earth is all we have and we need to live on it wisely. Before participants can get on the log, they must tell you one component of earth that they will represent. One half of the participants can be resources, like water, soil, air coal, minerals etc. The other half of the participants can be a race of humans, like Asian, African etc. They are going to carefully switch places. The last person on the “resources” side is going to come all the way down to where the last person is on the “races” side. They have to get all the way across and then switch without falling off the log. Explain that it is just like being in space. We care learning to use and interact with all the people and resources of earth without losing any one. Imagine if the person who was water just fell off the board. Could we survive without water? Or without Asian people? Many Asian people have made contributions to the human race we would be lost without. So when one person falls off, everyone starts over.
 2. In order to unlock the invisible gateway – first the group must balance on the board. When they have arranged themselves correctly, according to the facilitators terms, that combination triggers the lock on the gateway.

3 Boards (Quicksand / Endangered Species)

- *Object:* To get the group from one line to another without falling off the boards given to them. They need to get everyone safely to the other line and bring the boards with them. The facilitator may chose to give fewer than three boards to a smaller group. If a group member touches the ground then all start over.
- *Safety:* They may not throw the boards, slide them or place gently on the ground. The boards can get slippery when wet. No jumping long distances to boards (easily sprained ankles).
- *Situation:*
 1. Each student must pick an endangered species. What is an endangered species? Explain they are trying to leave their habitat before they are destroyed by their limiting factors (poachers, pollution, and habitat loss). If they touch the ground or fall off they have become extinct or left track for the poachers and must start over.
 2. Tell the kids that they are migrating ducks. Each board is a pond they stop at to rest and eat before going on. Why do some species migrate? If they touch the ground or fall off, they missed the pond and they are not strong enough to keep going so they must start over.
 3. You can say that the area they are crossing is quicksand and the boards distribute their weight so they don't sink.
 4. To make this more challenging tell the students that they cannot speak human language.

Skis/Trolleys (Goose Gossip /Glacier Crossing)

Objective: To get the whole group across a designated area stepping only on the given material. If a team member touches the ground the whole group starts over. The crossing props consist of 10-16 foot lengths of 4" x 4" lumber, with sequenced four foot sections of rope attached. The ropes can either be located every 12 inches along the length of the two boards, or located only at the ends of the boards (four ropes). This latter rope location causes more contact between participants. The participants must use the provided props to cross an "area of toxic material." Establish the "toxic substance" area. Mark this no-touch expanse with two lengths of rope, polypots, or cones.

- *Safety:*
 1. If someone falls off a board (either foot) that person must reverse their position (about face) on the board, or be assigned another type of penalty.

2. Participants must be reminded to catch themselves if they are about to fall. Don't allow participants to sacrifice their bodies and "take one for the team."
 3. Ankles can become twisted and knees badly bruised if a participant falls without removing their feet from the foot loops (if the trolleys you use have foot loops).
 4. Adults and the facilitator should be close enough to spot a falling participant.
- *Individual and Group Issues:* Clear communication, including effective listening; leadership concepts, such as communication across the lines, placement of leaders within a group, and assumptions about leaders' and followers' roles.
 - *Sequencing of Event:* Play games that involve appropriate touch before attempting this element. This can be one of the first problem-solving initiatives. Use this non-threatening initiative to acclimate the group to debriefing techniques and/or goals.
 - *Situation:*
 1. The participants have become a flock of geese. What do geese do each fall when it becomes cold? (*Migrate*) It's an amazing feat because they travel thousands of miles in what shape? (*a "V"*) There's one goose that is taking the brunt of the wind up there for everyone else. When the lead goose gets tired how does it let everyone else know? How do they decide where they're going or when to rest? Now you are going to become geese. Draw lines in the dirt, one to start from and one to finish at. One line represents Wisconsin, where they start from and the other line is Mexico or S. America where they all want to be. No one may touch the ground while migrating. If someone falls off, then the whole group must start over.
 2. Your group needs to transverse a glacier that is criss-crossed with deep crevasses. The only way to safely cross is to use the specialized skis. If anyone touches the glacier the ice will crumble sending you plunging hundreds of feet down to certain death in icy cold water.